

**REMARKS**

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the present amendment and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

By the present amendment, claims 1 and 7 have been amended.

Claims 1-4, 7 and 8 have been rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Fujita (US 6,139,051). Anticipation requires a single prior art reference that discloses each element of the claim. W.L. Gore & Associates v. Garlock, Inc., 220 U.S.P.Q. 303, 313 (Fed. Cir. 1983), cert. denied 469 U.S. 851 (1984). Additionally, the single prior art reference must disclose each and every element of the claimed invention, arranged as in the claim. Lindemann Maschinenfabrik GmbH v. American Hoist & Derrick Co., 221 U.S.P.Q. 481, 485 (Fed. Cir. 1984). "There must be no difference between the claimed invention and the reference disclosure, as viewed by a person of ordinary skill in the field of the invention". Scripps Clinic & Research Foundation v. Genentech Inc., 18 U.S.P.Q.2d 1001, 1010 (Fed. Cir. 1991). "The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the ... claim". Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co., 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 U.S.P.Q.2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989).

Claim 1 defines over the patent to Fujita. Fujita does not disclose a steering wheel comprising a skeleton for a rim and a spoke where the skeleton is interrupted in a region

between a spoke section and the steering wheel rim to define two separate skeleton parts which are attached to each other by a vibration-decoupling means. Fujita shows a steering wheel having a one-piece skeleton which extends from the hub 24 through the spokes and through the steering wheel rim (Fujita Column 4, lines 42-44).

Fujita does not disclose two separate skeleton parts attached to each other by vibration-decoupling means. Vibration-decoupling means according to claim 1, decouple the two portions of the skeleton attached to each other via the vibration-decoupling means with respect to vibration. There is no suggestion in Fujita to decouple portions of a two piece steering wheel skeleton with respect to vibration since Fujita discloses a one piece steering wheel skeleton and also does not provide vibration decoupling means in the steering wheel.

Further, Fujita also does not disclose that two separate skeleton parts are provided which are attached to each other by a vibration decoupling means which acts in all directions and at least largely isolates the rim in terms of vibration from the spoke section.

Thus, claim 1 should be allowed.

Claims 2-12 depend from claim 1 and define over the prior art for the same reasons as claim 1 and for the specific limitations recited therein. Regarding claim 2, Fujita does not disclose vibration-decoupling means at the transition point of the spoke to the steering wheel. The transition point 58 as stated in the office action regarding claim 2 in Fujita, are bolts for attaching a support plate 42 to the

skeleton. Bolts 58 are not vibration-decoupling means.

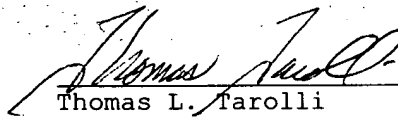
Regarding claim 7, the language has been amended to make clear that the elastic bearing comprises an elastic element to make clear that the elastic element is one of the components of the elastic bearing.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version with markings to show changes made."

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the above identified application is in condition for allowance, and allowance of the above-identified application is respectfully requested.

Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees for this amendment to our Deposit Account No. 20-0090.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas L. Tarolli  
Reg. No. 20,177

TAROLLI, SUNDHEIM, COVELL &  
TUMMINO L.L.P.  
1111 Leader Building  
526 Superior Avenue  
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-1400  
Phone: (216) 621-2234  
Fax: (216) 621-4072

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

21  
1. (Amended) A vehicle steering wheel, comprising:  
a hub,  
a steering wheel rim, and  
at least one spoke having at least one spoke section,  
a skeleton for said steering wheel rim and said spoke,  
said skeleton being interrupted in a region between said  
spoke section and said steering wheel rim to define two  
separate skeleton parts, and  
~~a vibration-decoupling means being provided on said spoke~~  
~~which acts in all directions and at least largely isolates~~  
~~said steering wheel rim in terms of vibrations from said at~~  
~~least one section of said spoke~~ attaching said skeleton parts  
to each other, said vibration-decoupling means acting in all  
directions and at least largely isolating said steering wheel  
rim in terms of vibrations from said at least one section of  
said spoke.

62  
7. (Amended) The vehicle steering wheel according to  
claim 4, wherein said bearing ~~has~~ comprises a pin, ~~and~~ a  
receiving shell for said pin, and an elastic equalizing  
element ~~being provided so as to be arranged~~ between said  
receiving shell and said pin.